

**CITY OF ROCK ISLAND**  
**CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

City Hall

1528 Third Avenue, Rock Island IL

City Council Chambers, 3rd Floor

4/24/2023 - Minutes

1. Call to Order

Mayor Thoms called the meeting to order at 6:47 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

2. This meeting will also be conducted by audio and video conference without the requirement of a physically present quorum of the Rock Island City Council due to the disaster declaration issued by Governor Pritzker.

3. Roll Call

Mayor Thoms asked City Clerk Samantha Gange to call the roll.

Present: Mayor Mike Thoms, Alderpersons Moses Robinson, Randy Hurt, Judith Gilbert, Jenni Swanson, Dylan Parker (virtual), Mark Poulos and Bill Healy.

Absent: None.

Staff: City Manager Todd Thompson, City Attorney Dave Morrison, City Clerk Samantha Gange, and other City Staff.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Thoms led in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. Moment of Silence

Mayor Thoms requested a moment of silence. A moment of silence was observed.

6. Public Comment

Martin Chaney approached the podium and said he was in favor of saving the iconic landmark commonly referred to as Black Hawk. He noted Rock Island was once an American Indian village and by destroying the iconic landmark would be like destroying a part of history and he

would like to see it preserved. The landmark could be used for educational purposes as well as serve as a reminder to the American Indians that live in the Quad Cities.

Natalie Linville Mass, founder for QC PastPort, approached the podium to speak in favor of the Inter-Tribal League of American Indians, a local group with many members living in Rock Island and the surrounding communities, who wish to restore the statue taken down by the recent storm. The statue serves as a reminder that American Indians from multiple tribes lived in Rock Island and still do today. Although the statue isn't a true representation of any specific local tribe, it serves as a reminder of the deep history and roots of past tribes such as the Kickapoo and Sauk. She said the statue should be placed in a public space where it can be restored and used as a tool to learn more about the tribes that once lived here. If the City of Rock Island decides not to keep the statue in the City, then it should be given to the Inter-Tribal League of American Indians as an educational tool to be placed elsewhere.

Lisa Alonzo addressed Council regarding the Black Hawk statue and stated her nationality as Potawatomi and Kickapoo Native American. She said her grandparents and great grandparents taught her to be very proud of their Native American culture and tearing it down would be a disgrace and disrespect to their history. She said if the City does not want the statue, she would like the City to allow the Inter-Tribal League of American Indians to take possession of it and use it to educate people about their culture in a positive way.

Rudy Vallejo addressed Council and said he was a member of the Kickapoo tribe of Kansas and was in support of saving the statue. He provided Council with a handout of an article written about 170 years ago by Chief Seattle. He noted the article discussed issues American Indians faced back then that are still relevant and applicable today. He opined the sign should not be destroyed as it would add to the landfill and have a negative impact on the environment. He offered to raise money to restore the statue and find a permanent home for it so that it can be used by local American Indians to educate the community.

Naomi Torrence came to the podium to address Council. She stated she was a City employee and a member of the Potawatomi tribe. She said that although some members of the Native Community positively identify with the sign, the commonly referred to Black Hawk statue is a commercial sign designed in the 1960s for commercial purposes and economic gain. The continuation of the use of the sign perpetuates stereotypes of the American Indian image. The sign should be dismantled and recycled in an environmentally responsible way and the metal be repurposed in a way that accurately portrays Black Hawk. She asked Council for the opportunity for the Native Community to raise funds for demolition of the sign.

Randall Smith addressed Council about the Black Hawk sign. He said there were two perspectives being shared with City Council. For some, they want the sign destroyed as it perpetuates several negative narratives that are an inaccurate portrayal of Black Hawk and American Indian culture. Others want to preserve the sign and use it for educational purposes. He asked City Council members to consider looking forward to the future and how it impacts natives in the community.

7. Minutes from the April 10, 2023 Study Session and City Council Meeting.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Gilbert moved to approve the minutes as printed; Aldersperson Hurt seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None

8. Update Rock Island

**Do you need help managing money?**

The City is offering FREE financial literacy classes this week. Classes are on Wednesday and Thursday nights April 26 and 27 from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Holiday Inn, 226 17th St., Rock Island, in the Captain 2 conference room. Food will be provided to all participants.

You may register for the two classes online at <HTTPS://WWW.RIGOV.ORG/FINANCIALLITERACY> or by calling Samantha Gange, city clerk and ARPA program manager at 309-732-2009.

**Learn to identify birds and wildflowers at Black Hawk State Park this weekend**

The 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Stroll Through Springtime event will be Saturday from 7 a.m. to noon at Black Hawk State Historic Site. Meet at Watchtower Lodge at Black Hawk State Park. Experts will help locate both resident and migratory birds in the morning hours and wildflowers will be identified in the surrounding woods starting at 10 a.m. For more information, go to <WWW.BLACKHAWKPARK.ORG> or call 309-788-9536.

**Pick up some great bargains this Saturday**

The Spring Community Garage Sale and Vendor Fair is Saturday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Longview Park, 1300 17<sup>th</sup> Street. Enjoy an amazing day of shopping and treasure hunting as you pick your way through 6,000 square feet of vendor space, rain or shine.

9. Proclamation declaring May 2023 as Motorcycle Awareness Month in the City of Rock Island.

Clerk Gange read the proclamation. Mayor Thoms read his declaration.

10. Proclamation declaring May 2023 as Mental Health Awareness Month in the City of Rock Island.

Clerk Gange read the proclamation. Mayor Thoms read his declaration.

11. Ordinances regarding the sale of City-owned properties. (Second Readings)

- a. Sale of City-owned property located at 1128 4th Avenue (PIN 0734416007) to Mukabaziga Agnes for \$1,042.50 plus closing costs.
- b. Sale of City-owned property located at 1425 11th Street (PIN 1602128025) to Mugabo Antoine for \$2,531.00 plus closing costs.
- c. Sale of City-owned property located at 422 8th Street (PIN 0734409016) to Mugabo Antoine for \$4,502.69 plus closing costs.
- d. Sale of City-owned property located at 601 5th Street (PIN 0734406016) to Vasudevan Raghavan & Giriya Ramasamy for \$1,825.00 plus closing costs.

- e. Sale of City-owned property located at 517 5th Street (PIN 0734404018) to Mukabaziga Agnes for \$683.50 plus closing costs.
- f. Sale of City-owned property located at 515 5th Street (PIN 0734404017) to Mukabaziga Agnes for \$2,406.94 plus closing costs.
- g. Sale of City-owned property located at 518 14th Avenue (PIN 1603227006) to Munyakaze Faustine for \$951.00 plus closing costs.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to pass ordinances a through g; Aldersperson Robinson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None

12. Consent Agenda.

- a. Claims for the week of March 24 through March 30, 2023 in the amount of \$718,200.46; for the week of March 31 through April 6, 2023 in the amount of \$1,321,653.50; for the week of April 7 through April 13, 2023 in the amount of \$1,415,506.35; and payroll for the weeks of March 20 through April 2, 2023 in the amount of \$1,633,178.96.
- b. ACH payments for the month of March 2023 in the amount of \$787,919.52.
- c. Purchase Card claims for the period of February 28, 2023 through March 27, 2023 in the amount of \$77,637.62.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Swanson moved to approve consent agenda items a through c; Aldersperson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None.

13. Claims

- a. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment #4 to General Constructors, Inc, Davenport, IA in the amount of \$85,304.31 for construction on the Schwiebert Park Marina dock renovations.

MOTION:

Alderson Poulos moved to allow the claim; Alderson Swanson seconded.

#### DISCUSSION

Alderson Parker recused himself from the vote due to the nature of his employment.

#### VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 6-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

14. Report from the Public Works Department regarding bids for the 2023 Sod Replacement and 50/50 Tree Program, Projects 2141 and 2352, recommending the bids be awarded to Greenspace Associates, Inc., Bettendorf, IA for the total amount of \$267,800.00.

#### MOTION:

Alderson Robinson moved to approve the bids as recommended; Alderson Gilbert seconded.

#### VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None.

15. Report from the Public Works Department regarding consulting services for the Downtown Streets Reconstruction/Revitalization Project, recommending a contract be awarded to Veenstra & Kimm, Inc., Rock Island, IL in an amount not to exceed \$610,784.00.

#### MOTION:

Alderson Parker moved to award the contract and authorize the City Manager to execute the Engineering Services Agreement; Alderson Swanson seconded.

#### VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None.

16. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department regarding the CY2022 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER).

#### DISCUSSION:

Alderson Parker asked Community and Economic Development Director Miles Brainard for an executive-level summary of the CAPER for the public. Mr. Brainard offered a review of what CAPER is about, which in essence is a report to the Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD) regarding the City's performance in the past program year. He discussed the details of each section of the report, as well as the accomplishments and setbacks of the program year.

Mr. Brainard noted the Healthy Homes Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Program that has been effected by local municipalities during recent years. He said that area is falling short, for reasons including staff changes and hang-ups with training and availability of qualified vendors. He then referenced the homestead program currently in progress, which is not yet complete but has carried from last year to this year.

Mr. Brainard discussed the Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program, which he stated has exceeded expectations, as the goal for the program year was 35 houses, but 37 have been completed. He said 10 of those homes were in the recap, which is focused within the racial and ethnic concentrated area of poverty near Douglas Park, according to census tract information. He noted the number of homes within the program is aligned with the number of contractors and staff capabilities.

Mr. Brainard discussed the job creation goal area, which refers to the Commercial Industrial Revolving Loan Fund (CIRLF). There have been no new CIRLF loans within the last program year, and he noted the state of the economy is a contributing factor. He said these goals should be reevaluated unless the economy sees a significant improvement.

Mr. Brainard said the program administration costs have been paid out in full. For property maintenance goals, building demolitions neared the expected number, but insufficient funds kept the department from reaching the goal. He noted that earmarked as part of the Targeted Area Repair and Rehabilitation Program (TARRP), a specific property inspector was to be hired. However, it was not working as intended, so the item was zeroed out from the budget. Under the public infrastructure category, he explained that these projects are generally developed using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. He said staff relies on estimates from the partners who operate the facilities in question as to how many people will be assisted.

Mr. Brainard discussed certain grants that are mixed with CDBG to stretch funds and leverage sources. One of these is Strong Communities, an Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) grant. He noted all applicants requested a one-year extension to use the funds, as the program was difficult to run across the state, and more flexibility was necessary. He said \$40,000 had been used on the first rehabilitation program house on 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue, with another \$40,000 to be used on another home on 32<sup>nd</sup> Street, and the remaining funds will be used for additional demolition of blighted structures. He said the Housing Rehabilitation and Accessibility Program (HRAP) is soon to launch as well.

Mr. Brainard reviewed some typos that were pointed out to staff regarding the columns of the consolidated plan that was the result of an import error, which will be corrected. He noted the correction of a staff job title, which should be Community Development Manager instead of Budget and Grants Manager. He pointed to page 25, section 3 of the report, noting the City does not have projects that are subject to this section. Therefore, the total number of activities under the CDBG column should say 0 instead of 6.

Mr. Brainard noted language regarding partnerships in this document as well as the Annual Action Plan (AAP), and said CDBG funding is often leveraged with partners to combat community poverty, but it may not be used directly. He pointed to the Lincoln Residences project, in which the City did not build them using CDBG funds, but did offer environmental review documents and remediation.

Alderman Robinson asked if this would be a way to create a program to begin infilling for certain properties on vacant lots. Mr. Brainard noted that CDBG funds are not eligible for new construction projects. He noted staff was in the process of collaborating with a HUD representative to possibly join with Moline in a coalition to pursue home funding, as both are

entitlement communities. Staff is aware that infilling is a priority, and other options are being pursued.

Aldersperson Parker asked Mr. Brainard to comment on the status of programs within the AAP. Mr. Brainard noted that TARRP has proven to not work in the way that was envisioned, meaning that more CDBG dollars would be concentrated in areas of the City that needed it, along with a dedicated inspector. He said a discussion is pending with the Community Development Commission (CDC) on how to retire TARRP and place available funds into general and emergency rehabilitation programs. Areas that TARRP was meant to address are already receiving assistance through other regular programs. Mr. Brainard noted there has been discussion of a micro-enterprise program, but there are more associated administrative burdens with such a thing.

Aldersperson Gilbert said she attended the most recent CIRLF meeting, and one of the bankers recommended that the interest rate be lower to encourage applicants. Mr. Brainard said a counterpoint would be that there may not be an interest rate high enough to successfully administer the program, and alternatives may need to be explored. Aldersperson Gilbert asked if figuring out the problems should not then be a priority. Mr. Brainard agreed, but that it should receive careful deliberation. He expressed a goal of bringing the CIRLF committee and the new CDC together to discuss these issues, as there are different levels of expertise between the two. Aldersperson Healy noted there are resources for CIRLF, but the question is how to attract people to the programs.

Mr. Brainard said the typos will be corrected before submitting to HUD, and he expected revisions to occur following upcoming meetings. He noted that HUD does not require that Council approve the document, but it is best practice, and gives staff the chance to discuss it in further detail.

#### MOTION:

City Attorney Morrison said it would be best to do an amended motion to ensure the reflected record is accurate.

Aldersperson Parker moved to make a motion as amended; Aldersperson Swanson seconded.

Mr. Brainard said there had just been a motion to make amendments to the main motion, which is the vote that is being taken. Then, there would need to be an additional vote on the main motion as amended. Mayor Thoms suggested withdrawing the most recent motions to make a new motion.

Alderspersons Swanson and Parker withdrew their motions.

Aldersperson Parker made a new motion to approve the 2022 CAPER with minor modifications and direct staff to submit it to HUD; Aldersperson Robinson seconded.

#### VOTE:

Motion passed on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None.

17. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department requesting the acceptance of the original bid from Valley Construction for the demolition of Firehouse No. 5 in Douglas Park.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Robinson moved to accept the original bid and direct the City Manager to negotiate and execute said contract subject to minor attorney modifications; Aldersperson Poulos seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Aldersperson Poulos said he had previously moved to table this item until the May 22, 2023 meeting in hopes that someone would have the opportunity to provide a plan to repurpose the firehouse. However, there was no interest as demonstrated by the lack of bids received and it would be inappropriate not to take action.

Aldersperson Gilbert asked why materials are required to be left on the construction site and what would be done with those materials. Mr. Brainard responded that there a number of historic materials and elements that need to be retained and reused in different ways. He noted staff are sensitive to the history and worked with the State Historic Preservation Office to determine what materials needed to be preserved or repurposed. For example, a large portion of the brickwork will be repurposed by the Parks and Recreation Department and the copper gutters and radiators will be repurposed at the Hauberg Estate.

Aldersperson Parker thanked staff and members of Council for allowing the exploration of the Request for Proposals for the firehouse. He indicated his intention of voting no and said that there has been lots of conversations around the table about the need to be more thoughtful about how public funds are spent. He said he would like the City to consider a feasibility study done for the museum as there was a feasibility study for the marina and campground and a museum recognizing the sports history at Douglas Park would be worth exploring.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 6-1-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: Parker. Absent: None.

18. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department regarding approval of the final RILCO Subdivision Plat.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to approve the final plat with minor technical corrections; Aldersperson Gilbert seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None

19. Report from the Community & Economic Development Department regarding the renewal of annual non-irrigated farm land lease agreements with Mr. Andrew Kordik, Mr. Scot Doxstader, and Mr. Kenneth Flack for 2023.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Hurt moved to approve the 2023 farm lease agreements along with the scaled rent increase; subject to minor attorney modifications; and authorize the City Manager and City Clerk to execute the contract documents; Aldersperson Poulos seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Aldersperson Healy asked if the lessees were aware of the rent increase. Mr. Brainard replied affirmatively.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None

20. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department regarding funding for three years of funding in the amount of \$109,713.00 in ARPA funds for the Quad Cities Regional Land Bank Authority.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Swanson moved to approve the land bank funding using ARPA funds; Aldersperson Robinson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None

21. Report from the Human Resources Department requesting approval of \$267,000.00 (\$1,000.00 for every full-time, non-police employee as of December 31, 2022) of ARPA funds for one-time employee bonuses.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Swanson moved to approve the allocation of \$267,000 of ARPA funds for CY 2023 employee bonuses; Aldersperson Poulos seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Aldersperson Poulos asked when it was intended that the payment be made, and if this was a bonus or an employee retention plan related to issues that arose during the pandemic. City Manager Thompson said this was being funded by ARPA unallocated and unrestricted funds, and therefore there is not a requirement to spend it in a manner consistent with the originally structured ARPA plan. He said the intention is that it serve as a retention bonus.

Human Resources Director Rob Baugous said the payout would be part of an exceptional payroll cycle as opposed to the standard cycle, or in about three weeks. Aldersperson Poulos asked if this would be a check for \$1,000 or if taxes were going to be taken out. Mr. Baugous confirmed that taxes would be taken out.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None.

22. Report from the Finance Department regarding an adjustment to the CY 2023 budget, increasing General Fund (101) revenues by \$267,000.000, increasing Unrestricted ARPA fund (248) expenditures by \$267,000.00, and increasing various funds for payroll depending on employee location by \$267,000.00.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Poulos moved to approve the budget adjustment as recommended; Aldersperson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None.

23. Report from the Finance Department regarding an adjustment to the CY 2023 budget, increasing the Community and Economic Development Fund (207) by \$15,000.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Swanson moved to approve the budget adjustment as recommended; Aldersperson Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None.

24. Report from the Traffic and Engineering Committee regarding a request from Roseanna Damp to install a handicapped parking space in front of her home located at 1537 39th Street. (First Reading)

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to consider the request, suspend the rules, and pass the ordinance; Aldersperson Gilbert seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None

25. Report from the City Clerk's office regarding a request from DeAnna Foster to close 16 1/2 Street at 1st and 2nd Avenues, as well as 17th Street at 2nd Avenue for a vegan/vegetarian/healthy living street festival on Saturday, August 18, 2023 from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

(Note the date is listed incorrectly. The correct date of the event is Saturday, August 19, 2023).

MOTION:

Aldersperson Robinson moved to approve the requests as recommended; Aldersperson Parker seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Aldersperson Gilbert said this was an exciting new event. Aldersperson Parker said as the only vegetarian on Council, he seconded wholeheartedly.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None.

26. Other Business

Aldersperson Hurt said he is the City's representative on the Rock Island County Waste Management Association (RICWMA), and has a special meeting regarding the transfer station proposal in Moline. He was looking for Council recommendations and direction, and asked them to review the information. He noted the measure could still proceed in spite of any failed vote. Aldersperson Gilbert asked what the other communities were saying about the measure. Aldersperson Hurt replied East Moline was opposed, Moline would likely abstain due to a conflict of interest, and he has spoken to other smaller communities, but the result would likely come down to who has weighted votes, such as Rock Island. Aldersperson Parker said this represents the City, and supported the measure with the possibility of Rock Island having a second location. Aldersperson Hurt said the City would be a logical second location.

Mayor Thoms said he disagreed, saying the measure would be judged more on whether there was a need. He said certain landfills have many years left, and RICWMA would judge needs. Aldersperson Parker opined that there was a need. Aldersperson Hurt noted that Moline was not very transparent during the beginning of the process. Aldersperson Gilbert asked what Scott County's concerns were about the project. Aldersperson Hurt said they would lose money. Mr. Thompson added that Scott County was concerned about their recycling center and landfill, but they do not have a vote with RICWMA.

Aldersperson Gilbert asked who would make the decision for a second location. Aldersperson Hurt said it would be RICWMA, but any plan would need to align with their vision. Mayor Thoms noted that the decision could be a long ways from being finalized. Mr. Thompson added that the decision is focused on whether the application is consistent with the agency plan.

Aldersperson Swanson thanked the Public Works Department and reminded residents to have patience, as debris from the recent storm is still being picked up. Public Works Director Mike Bartels told Council that his department hopes to have everything cleaned in the coming weeks, as they have had to divert crews to work on flood protection.

Aldersperson Gilbert asked Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce Downtown Rock Island Director Jack Cullen to provide information on the upcoming Rock Island Downtown Alliance meeting. Mr. Cullen said the Alliance will have their first meeting tomorrow, Tuesday April 25, 2023 from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Illinois Casualty Company building. He said the public is invited to attend, and a virtual meeting link can be posted on the City's website.

27. Motion to Adjourn.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Gilbert moved to adjourn; Aldersperson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None.

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

*Samantha Gange*

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Samantha Gange, City Clerk